

Session Law 2010-119

S.B. 1309

AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES TO WAIVE TEMPORARILY CERTAIN REQUIREMENTS OF THE MENTAL HEALTH COMMITMENT STATUTES FOR PARTICIPANTS IN THE FIRST EVALUATION PILOT PROGRAM AND TO DIRECT THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES TO STUDY CERTAIN ISSUES RELATING TO THE PROGRAM, AS RECOMMENDED BY THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE ON MENTAL HEALTH, DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES, AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE SERVICES.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. S.L. 2003-178, as amended by Section 10.27 of S.L. 2006-66, as amended by Section 1.1(a)(5) of S.L. 2007-504, and as further amended by Section 3 of S.L. 2009-340, reads as rewritten:

"SECTION 1. The Secretary of Health and Human Services may, upon request of an LME, waive temporarily the requirements of G.S. 122C-261 through G.S. 122C-263 and G.S. 122C-281 through G.S. 122C-283 pertaining to initial (first-level) examinations by a physician or eligible psychologist of individuals meeting the criteria of G.S. 122C-261(a) or G.S. 122C-281(a), as applicable, as follows:

- (1) The Secretary has received a request from an LME to substitute for a physician or eligible psychologist, a licensed clinical social worker, a masters level psychiatric nurse, or a masters level certified clinical addictions specialist to conduct the initial (first-level) examinations of individuals meeting the criteria of G.S. 122C-261(a) or G.S. 122C-281(a). The waiver shall be implemented on a pilot-program basis. The request from the LME shall specifically describe:
 - a. How the purpose of the statutory requirement would be better served by waiving the requirement and substituting the proposed change under the waiver.
 - b. How the waiver will enable the LME to improve the delivery or management of mental health, developmental disabilities, and substance abuse services.
 - c. How the services to be provided by the licensed clinical social worker, the masters level psychiatric nurse, or the masters level certified clinical addictions specialist under the waiver are within each of these professional's scope of practice.
 - d. How the health, safety, and welfare of individuals will continue to be at least as well protected under the waiver as under the statutory requirement.
- (2) The Secretary shall review the request and may approve it upon finding that:
 - a. The request meets the requirements of this section.
 - b. The request furthers the purposes of State policy under G.S. 122C-2 and mental health, developmental disabilities, and substance abuse services reform.
 - c. The request improves the delivery of mental health, developmental disabilities, and substance abuse services in the counties affected by the waiver and also protects the health, safety, and welfare of individuals receiving these services.
 - d. The duties and responsibilities performed by the licensed clinical social worker, the masters level psychiatric nurse, or the masters level certified clinical addictions specialist are within the individual's scope of practice.